

# Womans Future After the War

**A Noted French Writer's Theory That Woman's Enforced Activity in the Industrial World Has Proved That the Professions and Routine Callings Should Be Left Solely to Women**

IN no war in history has woman occupied quite the same position as she does now in Europe. Because of the drain in the men, practically every industrial establishment is run by her, as well as the public utilities—street cars, motor buses, and so on. In the learned professions she is doing her part as well.

For the first time in centuries woman has, in fact, tasted economic freedom and is undergoing the test of her fitness for occupations heretofore thought purely masculine. In the light of these happenings what will woman's future be after the war? Will she continue in her new occupations, and will there be a greater conflict of sexes than ever? Or will man adapt himself to woman's position? And, if so, how?

Here Madame Valentine de Saint-Point, one of the most noted of French writers and thinkers, gives her very interesting and curious conclusions upon the subject.

**By Mme. Valentine de St. Point**

*The Parisian Poetess and Grandniece of the Great Lamartine.*

WHEN the educated men of a nation are mainly absorbed in intellectual sedentary and artistic occupations it is a sign of maturity and to some extent of decadence. America, which has not yet reached this stage, should take warning from the example of Europe and protect herself against a tendency which threatens the vitality of the country.

The great remedy for this tendency is to leave to women the occupations which do not call for great physical energy and creative ability, and thus save the manhood of the country for its most fitting career. I will explain how history, and especially the experience of France, teaches this lesson.

In the first place we should remember that women have shown an extraordinary capacity for administrative duties. A clever woman rules not by force, but by her subtle influence over men. Considering how few women have been rulers, the number of great queens that have lived is extraordinary. The names of Semiramis, Dido, Elizabeth of England, Maria Theresa of Austria, Catherine of Russia, Blanche of Castile and Queen Victoria immediately spring to one's mind. A superior woman possesses the power of controlling the fiercest fighting men by her intuition and mental quickness.

Perhaps the most remarkable example of this is the early Assyrian queen, Semiramis, to whom many of the most remarkable achievements of early civilization are attributed. The great mass of legends concerning her, while they may not all be true, are undoubtedly founded upon a real character, and give us a wonderful picture of a superlatively brilliant woman. We are told that when she was threatened with a dangerous revolt she admitted the people to her palace, and appearing before them in superb beauty almost unadorned. Some of the more daring raised their spears to attack her, but beneath her fascinating gaze fell humbly on their knees. It is characteristic of Semiramis that when she began to lose her beauty she disappeared from public sight and caused the people to believe she had ascended to heaven in the form of a dove.

In the earliest stages of civilization, when men were generally employed in fighting, women filled many important administrative occupations. There were the vestal virgins of ancient Rome, who kept alive the sacred fires; the Celtic druidesses who played the leading part in the religious ceremonies of our ancestors; the priestesses of the Egyptian temples and the prophetesses of the Greek oracles.

Many of the women mentioned were, of course, exceptional, but even that in virile ages of society women often performed successfully many of the duties we now reserve to destroy the manhood of our educated men.

In the most primitive stage of society, when men began to settle around a centre of wealth, such as a fertile plot of earth, or an easily worked copper mine, the liberal professions did not exist. The pioneers of civilization have something more urgent to do than to go to law, to listen to verbose orators or to read long-winded books. The first-comers on a soil, which enables them to live and promises wealth, must first prepare the

earth for the future harvests. They live as explorers who have no time to lose. They settle their quarrels on the spot. They know only one law—the law of the strong. In the fierce struggle for existence, no one has taste or time for speeches and romance. It is the period of direct action in everything. No one finds the opportunity to be petted, or flattered, or surrounded with luxuries.

At a later period, when the group of pioneers has triumphed over the first difficulties of the wilderness, there arises a class of more peaceful persons engaged in commerce. They profit by the efforts made by the pioneers and most commonly grow rich at their expense. They develop the desire for law and order.

When they have formed a city they will need lawyers to fix agreements in writing and to settle or create disputes. They will need doctors and druggists to nurse the increasing sick, and orators of all kinds to beguile the people. Naturally these men of the law and arts must be chosen from among the most educated men of the community and this gives them a position of superiority. When they are few in number, as at the beginning, they are highly respected. But when they have gained a certain prestige the luxuries of their profession will attract all those who have no taste for the stern callings of war and adventure, and who prefer to win fame in an armchair without peril.

A new country possesses few of these timorous and peaceful spirits. The strenuous life has then more devotees than the easy chair. But as the country grows the operations of government increase, and the people become accustomed to the intricacies of the law and the burdens of red tape. In short, man having become less virile, less youthful, less in love with danger, turns toward the safe and distinguished liberal professions. Then these wise ones become bound together in a union to hinder the too rapid success of the pioneer and the fighter.

In this way an hour comes in the life of almost every civilized country when words, written or spoken, triumph over deeds. This point marks the maturity of the people, the beginning of its decadence.

In Europe, alas! this hour has struck for too many countries. The professions of all kinds were literally over-run before the war. They were not lucrative, except in rare cases. In spite of the poverty which they brought they continued to represent among the best families of our old countries ideals of life work to be held before their children.

Lawyers without clients and doctors without patients waited until old age gave them a chance to succeed to the practice of some elder. We were over-run with quill drivers of all kinds, deprived of the joys of life, not really living, looking at life with jaundiced eyes and ulcerated soul, and yet preserving, after all, a fascinating social prestige. Such conditions can only prevail among old and weary nations.

It is not normal that a healthy man who has before him the whole world should resign himself to idle loitering on the benches of law courts or in an office where, in most cases, no one comes to see him. If he is physically healthy



Blanche of Castile, Queen of France, Who Was a Pioneer in the Education of Children in the Middle Ages. Mme. de Saint-Point Thinks This is Clearly a Field of Work That Should Be Left Entirely to Women.

he has a sick soul. When such men are countless, as they are in the oldest nations of Europe, it means that the national soul is sick. It means that the hour of downfall for that country is approaching. In truth, while the professional men of these nations in their armchairs before their bundles of paper grow lifeless, physically and morally, men of other nations, plunged in great hazards, rush over the world seeking enterprises and in great hazards, rush over the world seeking wealth for themselves and renown for their country.

The terrible war which is now going on has sounded the note of alarm, which has brutally aroused the ancient nations of Europe. They had still too much life to permit this terrible and deadly paid awakening to come without displaying a magnificent renewal of strength. The liberal professions in France, like all the others, have furnished innumerable soldiers, and death has reaped its harvest among them, as in all other walks of life. This blood, so freely shed, must teach a lesson in the future. We must see that the dead soldiers are not replaced in our professional ranks by other young men who are less numerous than they were and whom we need in the field of action.

The example of Europe should be used.

Man must be a creature of action or his country will fall into decay. America should not wait for the horrible remedy of war to sweep away the young men from the professions and anaemic callings. Let them not enter upon this dangerous path, but seek bravely the life of action which becomes more and more necessary as the struggle for existence between countries and between races becomes more and more acute.

In all countries true men should live for action. To keep men in the path of action, for which they were intended by nature, there is only one way. That is to preserve the liberal professions and sedentary callings for women.

The advantage to society to be gained by this course would be double, since it would employ masculine energy in the best way and reserve an immense domain for the energy of women, an energy which is too often being dissipated in

foolish trifles or left unused altogether. This essential reform would satisfy men and women individually and would be an immense national advantage.

Woman has remarkable qualities of order, of passive patience, of daily and unflinching perseverance and of love of detail, which make her better suited than man to fill most of the professions and sedentary callings.

To quibble about figures and the texts of laws, as our lawyers do; to cover documents with formal phrases, as our Government employees do; to defend a trivial act with mighty phrases, as our barristers do; to enforce the minor regulations of the law; to weigh letters like our post-office employees, or measure out drops of medicine, like our druggists—all these duties lie especially and clearly within the province of women.

The studies necessary to qualify for

INTERNATIONAL NEWS SERVICE



Lady Gertrude Crawford, One of England's Titled Women Who Has Become Wonderfully Expert at Turning Spindles.



The War Has Demonstrated that Women Make Excellent Millers.

"Women from the earliest times have shown a remarkable aptitude for administrative work and have made intuition and guile take the place of force," says Madame de Saint-Point. "The most striking example of this is Queen Semiramis, the greatest queen of ancient Assyrians, who quelled her savage, rebellious people by simply admitting them to her palace and fascinating them by the sight of her superb beauty, almost unadorned. The ferocious Assyrians, who had raised their spears to strike her, fell upon their knees in awe-struck admiration."

these professions, matters of memory and detail, come easily to women. Indeed, with a little perseverance the most ordinary woman can master them.

A woman can also become an excellent physician, because she is possessed more than man of the faculty of intuition. That would make her a superior diagnostician. For several years, indeed, the liberal professions have been open to women in nearly all the great nations, but men, having established their supremacy in them centuries ago, have prevented them from enjoying an equal position. Women have not found reasonable opportunity in the ranks. The struggle has been particularly severe for them because they had to fight against the prejudices and the habits of the general public formed ages ago. We find, however, that in new countries like the United States, where the rights of women have been recognized with comparative generosity, they form an important element in the liberal professions and other occupations largely filled by men in Europe. It is, therefore, evident that women will gain as much as men by a reform which will give each sex its most suitable work.

Women will fill admirably the position of lawyers, doctors, teachers, preachers and minor government employees who, with or without good reason, are required in large numbers by modern society. All women of moderate intelligence will find a place suited to them in these callings which should in future be exclusively reserved to their sex. This social revolution can have only good results. The intelligent employment of feminine activities will end the vexatious feminist movement. The duties of the various classes mentioned will be at least as well performed by women as men. Indeed, psychologists who have studied the feminine and the masculine mind say that woman can be relied upon to perform her duties with more unvarying exactness than man.

The exclusive employment of women in these callings will force masculine activities to become more creative, daring, to inventions and creations in all fields, the great nations of the present day will begin their decline from this moment.

On the other hand, that nation which shall first establish a perfect equilibrium between the activities of the two sexes will inevitably become the greatest power in the world.